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A Synopsis

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IMPACT OF TRIBAL WELFARE POLICIES AND SCHEMES ON SCHEDULE TRIBES DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF DARJEELING DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL

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STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM:

Developments and integration of the marginalized sections of society are the avowed objectives of the national development strategy to do that or accomplish that the Indian government have taken various welfare initiatives and constitutional safeguards for tribal people so they could develop themselves and help in nation-building. However, following 76 years of independence, their conditions in terms of education and socio-economics have barely changed. According to the 2011 census, out of the total population of India, 8.6% belongs to the Schedule Tribe, and among them, 97% live in rural areas. These remote tribal communities continue to live in extreme poverty with low income and literacy rates, high rates of unemployment, inadequate nutrition, and health problems. As per the 2011 estimates of the poverty ratio report of the Planning Commission of India, the percentage of STs living below the poverty line has come down from 62.3% in rural areas during 2004–05 to 45.3% during 2011–12. In urban areas, the percentage of STs living below the poverty line has come down from 35.5% during 2004–05 to 24.1% during 2011–12. According to data from the 2011 census, the illiteracy rate among tribals in India is 41%. As per the recent Tribal Development Report 2022 published by the Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation, 48.2% of tribal children leave school before completing Class 8, and this number jumps to 62.4% by the time they reach Class 10. According to a 2023 NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau) report, crime against Schedule Tribes in India has increased by 14.3% compared to 2021. The infant mortality rate among the STs in India is 41.6 per 1,000, according to the 2019–2021 National Health Survey.

Therefore, in order to determine new issues, challenges, and transformation after long-term implementation for the development of the tribal people and their integration into society, it is required to assess the tribal welfare schemes and policies at the micro level in order to pace the effectiveness of tribal development efforts and bridge the gaps between the actual needs of the tribal people in the study regions and the welfare incentives provided by the government, it is imperative to ascertain the economic, social, educational, and cultural demands of these people.

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- What is the present socio-economic, educational, and political situation of the tribal in the areas of study?
- What are the different tribal welfare policies and schemes implemented in the study area? Are they aware of such policies and schemes? What is the extent of their participation in these schemes?
- How are tribal welfare policies and schemes impacting the development of the tribals, and to what extent have they been successful in overcoming their problems in the study areas?
- What is the role of local self-government in the implementation of these policies and schemes in the study areas?
- What are the obstacles that are hindering the successful implementation of these policies and schemes in the study areas?
- What are the problems still facing the tribals in the study area?

RESEARCH COVERAGE: THEMES AND AREAS

One of the biggest and most varied tribal groups in the world is found in India. The tribes are the autochthonous or native people of the land who are believed to be the earliest settlers in the Indian Peninsula. They are generally called *Adivasis*, implying original inhabitants.
The Constitution of India gave recognized a section of people designated as the Schedule Tribes and makes special provisions for their socio-economic, educational, cultural, and so on for their development. Nearly 700 types of Schedules Tribes were recognized by Article 342 of the Indian Constitution, and they were dispersed throughout all of India's states and union territories. Every group of these tribes in India has an own religion, culture, language, tradition, customs, and issues that vary depending on the community.

Schedule Tribes: Scheduled Tribes are defined as "such tribes or tribal communities or parts of groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purpose of this constitution" under Article 366(25) of the Indian Constitution. According to Article 342(1), the President is defined with regard to any State or Union Territory. In the event that a State, the President may designate certain tribes, tribal communities, or subgroups within tribes or tribal communities as Schedule Tribes with regard to that State or Union Territory, as applicable, by public notification following consultation with the Governor of that State. Article 342(2): By law, the Parliament may add to or remove Schedule Tribes from the list that is provided in a notification made in accordance with clause that shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.

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West Bengal: West Bengal, also known as ''Poschim Bongo", is an Indian state located in the eastern bottleneck of the country. It is surrounded by the countries Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh and the states of Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar, Sikkim, and Assam. The official language of West Bengal is the Bengali. West Bengal is comprised of 23 districts, and Darjeeling is one of them. According to the 2011 census, the total population of West Bengal is 91,347,736. The male population is 46,927,387 and the female population is 44,420,347. According to a 2011 census, 52,963 people in west Bengal belong to schedule tribes, which is about 5.8% of the state's population out of them, 94.86% of Schedule tribes in West Bengal live in villages. In West Bengal, there were 40 tribes living in different regions of the state. Tribal communities are present in all the districts of the state. A higher concentration of tribal population is seen in the districts of Darjeeling, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri, Dakshin Dinajpur, Paschim Medinipur, Bankura, and Purulia.

As per the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950, the following were listed as scheduled tribes in West Bengal.

1. Asur	9. Chero	17. Kharwar	25. Magh	33. Oraon
2. Baiga	10. Chik Baraik	18. Khond	26. Mahali	34. Parhaiya
3. Bedia, Bediya	11. Garo	19. Kisan	27. Mahli	35. Rabha
4. Bhumij	12. Gond	20. Kora	28. Mal Pahariya	36. Santal
5. Bhutia, Sherpa, Toto,Dukpa, Kagatay, Tibetan, Yolmo.	13. Gorait	21. Korwa	29. Mech	37. Sauria Paharia
6. Birhor	14. Hajang	22. Lepcha	30. Mru	38. Savar
7. Birjia	15. Ho	23. Lodha, Kheria, Kharia	31. Munda	39. Limbu (Subba)
8. Chakma	16. Karmali	24. Lohara, Lohra	32. Nagesia	40. Tamang

The Study Area: The Darjeeling district of West Bengal has been selected for this study. The Darjeeling district is comprised of 4 sub-divisions, namely 1. Darjeeling Sadar 2. Kurseong 3. Mirik 4. Siliguri. which consists of 9 blocks. Darjeeling (Sadar) has 3 blocks, namely Darjeeling-pulbazar, Rangali Rangliot, and Jorebunglow-sukiapokhri; Keorseong sub-division has only one block, which is Kurseong; Siliguri sub-division has 4 blocks, namely Matigara, Naxalbari, Phansidewa, and Khoribari; and Mirik sub-division has Mirik block. Since the target people of my research work are rural tribes that were scattered in distinct parts of each block, I will take four (4) blocks of the Darjeeling district for my study. This study is based on theoretical as well as empirical parts. The sample size of the study is fixed at 50 members for each block.

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Table no: 1 gives detail of Schedule Tribes population of India, West Bengal, and Darjeeling District.

Country/ State/ District	Total Population	Schedule Tribes	% of Schedule Tribes to Total proportion of Population
India	1,210,569,573	10,42,81,034	8.6
West Bengal	91,347,736	5,296,963	5.8
Darjeeling	18,46,823	397,389	21.5

Source: census of India 2011

Table no: 2 gives detail of Schedule Tribes population of the study Block.

Block	KHARIBARI	PHANSHIDEWA	MIRIK	KURSEONG
Schedule Tribes	21,262	62,595	14,280	29,232

Source: census of India 2011

Welfare Policies and Schemes for the Development of Schedule Tribes:

Development is a continuous process that affects people's value systems, way of life, and physical, social, political, and economic institutions. Tribal development may also be defined as a procedure that aids in enhancing the capacity building of tribal people in order to enable them to live standard life. The state and central governments of India have taken notice of the extreme socioeconomic, political, and educational backwardness of the rural tribal people, which has become an impediment to both their own and the country's progress. Therefore, to tackle these central and state government of India has been engaged in various development and welfare activities for addressing the needs and issues concerning the Scheduled Tribes and several socio-economic, education and health developmental policy and schemes initiates for protection and promotion of Schedule Tribes.

So, this study will be an attempt to identify the present socio-economic, educational, and political and cultural condition of tribal people in Darjeeling district of West Bengal and analyze the impact factor of various tribal welfare policies and schemes that are taking place under the initiatives of the government of India for tribal development. So that true and effective tribal development policies and schemes can be made, and tribal problems can be solved.

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LITERATURE REVIEW:

Rumki Bose in her book **''Impact of Tribal Development Policies on Primitive Tribe of West Bengal'' (2014),** observed the present socio-economic, educational, and cultural conditions of the Toto, Birohar, and Lodha primitive tribes of West Bengal and how tribal development policies and programs impact their development. From the observations and responses of the study, she found that the deplorable condition of these tribes is due to their lack of knowledge about the rights and opportunities provided to them by the government and, above all, their unwillingness to acquire self-sufficiency through the proper utilization of government help. Though a lack of sincerity in the application of government initiatives is apparent most of the time, excessive alcoholic addiction is a barrier to their development.

Marsha Lama in his book **''Tribal Development and the Role of Panchayats: The Study of Darjeeling District''(2011),** wanted to show the development of the tribal community inhabiting the areas of Darjeeling Hills and the role played by the Panchayats in the development of the tribal lifestyle. For which she selected Jorebunglow-Sukhiapokhari and Mirik Block of Darjeeling district of West Bengal to identify the present socio-economic conditions of the tribals and the impact of the development programs implemented through the Panchayats upon the development of tribals in the region.

M.K. Chowdhuri, D.K. Roy and S. De and S. Basu, their book **'' Ethnographic Notes on the Schedule Tribes of West Bengal''(2003)**, which is prepared by the Backward Classes Welfare Department, depicts a brief ethnographic study for each of the enlisted tribal communities along with their population distribution, clan structure, socio-cultural rites and festivals, etc., but the book has no discussion about the developmental initiatives for the tribals since independence in recent times.

Devendra Thakur and D.N. Thakur in their book **''Tribal Life in India: Industrialization in Tribal Areas'' (1994),** Thakur examines the effects of industrialization in the pre-Independence period on the tribal populations, when the establishment of heavy industries such as heave engineering at Ranchi and iron and steel plants at Rourkela, Bhilai, Durgapur, etc. The tribal area, which had no environmental issues, has gradually filled with smoke and industrial waste. Despite the facts, their research showed that they receive almost nothing in return. The study also addresses cottage, small, and large-scale industries that were developed in the Indigenous people's backward areas. It also discusses the state of industrial complexes in the tribal belts alongside this. A notable part of this effort in the tribal areas was industrial planning.

Anil Kumar Singh, in his book **''Tribes and Tribal Life' (1993),** highlights how far the tribal communities have come since their first encounters with "civilized" humanity. The Christian

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missionaries opened routes that showed the so-called savages were more sophisticated than the sophisticated schemes of the civilized man. In India, they were referred to as "the uncivilized races of the Empire" by British soldier-historians. Nonetheless, it was the Christian missionaries who introduced the aboriginal populations to modernity and progress via education, better health care, and a contemporary way of living. A wide mirror reflecting the diversity of human character and activity and its interesting forms and varieties is the literature on tribes and tribal peoples that exists today.

B.K. Roy Burman in his book **''Beyond Mandal and After' (1992),** outlined the colonial era's social and political processes as well as the political elites' reactions to the constitution's many, extensive suggestions. Positive discrimination protections favouring the underprivileged segments of the Indian population are enshrined in the constitution.

H. C. Upadhyay (1991) '' Reservation for SC and ST", To him, reservation facilities were introduced through a variety of constitutional safeguards, as part of positive or affirmative action aimed at restoring the socioeconomic, educational, and political situations of SC and ST. As a result, numerous nonprofit organizations have been established to promote the advancement of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe segments of society.

DR. Talukdar in his book **''Political Trsansition in Tribal India'' (1987),** discussed the impacts of the Panchayati Raj system on the tribal village of the East Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. The study makes an in-depth analysis of the tribal political transition process and modernization at the grass-roots level through the functioning of Panchayati Raj institutions.

Xavier Borogaon and Asit Das, in their article ''**Impact of Globalization on Tribal Communities with special references to Coochbehar District of West Bengal' (2018),** examined the impacts of globalization on the tribal communities of Coochbehar. They found that tribal culture is affected by innovations, urbanization, modernization, socialization, etc., and tribal communities in Coochbehar district of West Bengal progress their lifestyles, i.e., house pattern status, literacy rate, medicinal treatment, agriculture, industry, etc. The literacy rate among tribal communities has increased in the last decades, where medicinal practices have not improved due to their own culture.

R.S. Mann, in his article '**Tribal Development: An Alternative Strategy' (1983),** discussed the various measures taken for the upliftment of the conditions of the tribal. He examined the weakness of these schemes and suggested dimensions for strengthening the existing model of tribal welfare to impart maximum benefit to these sections of people.

M. Meshram and V.J. Nandapurkar ''Educational Development of Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe'' (2012), describe that in the era of liberalization, globalization and privatization education is key to development basically availability and accessibility of educational opportunities especially for Dalit and poor section of society. He observed that absence of

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political inclination, negligence on behalf of government mechanism and violation of directive principles.

A.K. Das, in his article **''Tribal Welfare and Development in West Bengal'' (1983),** In his article gives a detailed account on the measures taken to promote the socio-economic conditions and educational standard of the tribal people of West Bengal since the First Year Plan.

In the above-mentioned books and articles from the identified journals, however, there is a lack of in-depth discussion about the impact of welfare policies and schemes on the tribes in Darjeeling district of West Bengal. Thus, an effort has been taken to close some of the current gap in this research.

OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH:

The purpose of the present study is to conduct intensive field work as per the specially designed set of village and household questionnaires to collect firsthand information and data from the selected sample villages representing all development blocks of the study region. The main objective of the present study is to understand and study the impacts of various tribal welfare policies and schemes on their development within their natural settings.

- The first objective of this study is to collect empirical data on the demographic and some socio-economic and educational conditions of the schedule tribes in Darjeeling district of west Bengal.
- Secondly, to identify and record the various development inputs under the different welfare policies and schemes of the government and received by the beneficiaries in the selected study area.
- Thirdly, to examine the role of local self-government in the implementation of these policies and schemes.
- Fourth, to gather empirical information on how government programs and plans are being implemented among the tribes and how government officials view the development of tribals.
- Fifth, to evaluate the tribes in the study area's socioeconomic and educational growth.
- Finally, to find out reasons behind the non-utilization of these policies and schemes and some recommendations have been made for better policy formulation and implementation.

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Hypotheses:

The following hypotheses will be tested in the proposed study.

1. Tribal welfare policies and schemes of the Government of India have negligible impact on the economic upliftment of tribal population in the Darjeeling district.
2. Government policy and schemes have not met satisfactorily the educational and employment needs of tribal in Darjeeling district.
3. In the face of rapid modernization and cultural uniformity, Darjeeling's Indigenous people frequently struggle to maintain their own cultural identities.
4. There is low awareness among the Schedule Caste about the welfare policy and schemes meant for them.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH:

After 76 years of independence, the research will aid in understanding the socioeconomic and political circumstances that Schedule tribes are currently in. And how do the recipients of different people-oriented tribal welfare programs, who are selected based on household surveys, age, and gender, as well as the federal and state progressive tribal welfare programs, contribute to the identification and evaluation of the tribe's future needs?

In order to quantify the intensity, size, and pace of transformation brought about by welfare policies and schemes, an attempt will be made to stratify the study region according to the degree of transformation. Additionally, it will pinpoint the study region's possible development regions and offer a database for the purpose of launching a new strategy for rural tribal development in the future.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research methodology is a precondition for doing scientific research. In simple terms we can say that research methodology is a systematic plan for conducting research on a topic. Research methodology has a few stages which help a researcher in identifying, selecting, processing, and analyzing information about a research problem. Because of which this study has also adopted the research methodology to systematic way complete the research work.

Research Design: research design will be both descriptive as well as exploratory. Descriptive in the sense that the subject of the research will be studied within their natural settings and exploratory is because of that the research questions of the study have not been studied in depth. Therefore, both the quantitative and qualitative data will be collected. And both the primary and secondary sources of data will be used for this study.

Based on the interview schedule-cum-questionnaire and conversations with the respondents, including villagers and village leaders, primary data will be gathered through the field research and survey. Focus Group Discussions will be used to gather some qualitative data (FGD). The

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competent and knowledgeable individuals in the respective villages will then properly verify the information that has been gathered.

The secondary sources of data were the government census reports, documents and legislation of the governments, books on the present research topic and on related aspects of the current study. Secondary sources also included articles in research journals, magazines, news-paper and other published documents.

Period of Study: From 2011 to 2024

Area of Study: Darjeeling district of West Bengal.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

Data collection and interpretation for this project will be carried out with careful consideration. Still, there are a few limitations to the study that can be considered: -

a) Because the study is contextual—both periodically and geographically—its conclusions could not apply to other contexts or times periods.

b) Only 50 respondents can participate in the perception study from four (4) blocks of the Darjeeling district within the State of West Bengal.

c) It is expected that individuals who have replied are sincere in sharing their opinions and have done so without bias.

TENTATIVE CHAPTERIZATION:

1. INTRODUCTION.
2. DARJEELING DISTRICT: A PROFILE.
3. EVOLUTION OF WELFARE INITIATIVES IN INDIA.
4. WELFARE POLICIES AND SCHEMES IN WEST BENGAL.
5. ROLE OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN DARJEELING DISTRICT.
6. IMPACT OF WELFARE POILICIES AND SCHEMES ON THE DARJEELING DISTRICT.
7. CONCLUSION.

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20.04.2024

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